

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Boat Section**  
4010 W. Broad Street, P.O. Box 11528, Richmond, VA 23230-1528  
Toll Free (877) 898-2628 or V/TDD (804) 367-1278 for the hearing impaired

**Application for  
Watercraft Certificate of Title and Certificate of Number (Registration)**

**How long does it take to process the application?**

Approximately three weeks.

**Does this form apply to my watercraft?**

All boats propelled by machinery, whether gasoline, diesel, or electric, must be registered and titled.

All sail-powered vessels longer than 18 feet must be titled.

**Am I required to pay watercraft sales tax? If so, how much?**

Purchasers of all motorboats must pay a 2% Watercraft Sales Tax on the gross purchase price of the boat and motor. The maximum tax is \$2,000. If you have already paid the watercraft sales tax to a dealer, a sales invoice showing gross purchase price and watercraft sales tax paid must be submitted. If you purchased the watercraft in another state and submit proof that you paid sales tax, that amount can be used as a credit against any watercraft sales tax you owe. If the out-of-state sales tax you paid is less than the 2% due in Virginia, you must include the difference with this application.

**What documents do I need to submit with this application?**

**1. NEW WATERCRAFT**

- a. Original Manufacturer's or Importer's Certificate of Origin, with the "First Assignment" portion completed by the dealer.
- b. Sales invoice showing gross purchase price of the boat and motor separate from the trailer, and any sales tax paid.

**2. HOME-BUILT WATERCRAFT (Note: Your watercraft may be subject to inspection by a law enforcement officer.)**

- a. Affidavit\* stating the watercraft is home built.
- b. Copies of receipts for building materials.

**3. USED WATERCRAFT**

**Titled in Virginia**

- a. Original title with assignment of title completed by the sellers.
- b. If purchased from a dealer, the title and a sales invoice showing gross purchase price and the watercraft sales tax paid.

**Titled by you in another state**

- a. Title from the other state.

**Registered by you in another state**

- a. Copy of the out-of-state registration.

**Titled by someone else in another state**

- a. Title from the other state with the assignment of title completed by all the titled owners.
- b. If purchased from a dealer, the title and a sales invoice showing gross purchase price and the watercraft tax paid.

**Registered in Virginia, but never titled**

- a. Dated bill of sale or "Notification of Change in Status of a Numbered Vessel" form\* signed by the registered owners.

**Registered by someone else in another state, but never titled**

- a. Copy of the out-of-state registration.
- b. Bill of sale signed by the registered owners.

**Documented with the U.S. Coast Guard**

- a. Certificate of Documentation, and Abstract of Title with proof of lien release in the owner's name.
- b. Bill of sale signed by all the documented owners.

**Never registered or titled in Virginia or any other state**

- a. The "Affidavit\* for Registering and Titling a Motorboat Not Previously Registered and/or Titled". (Note: Your watercraft may be subject to inspection by a law enforcement officer.)

**AVOID ERRORS.** The three most common errors that result in failure to issue a registration and title are (1) failure to properly complete the application, (2) failure to submit the title to the boat that is properly assigned by the seller, and (3) failure to include the proper fees. Avoid these time-consuming mistakes.

\* Forms are available from the headquarters or regional offices of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries or over the internet at [www.dgif.state.va.us](http://www.dgif.state.va.us) by choosing BOATING then BOAT REGISTRATION AND TITLING then FORMS.

**USE THESE INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING**  
**Application for**  
**WATERCRAFT CERTIFICATE OF TITLE AND CERTIFICATE OF NUMBER (Registration)**

**AVOID ERRORS.** Remember the three most common errors that result in failure to issue a registration and title are (1) failure to properly complete the application, (2) failure to submit the title to the boat that is properly assigned by the seller, and (3) failure to include the proper fees. Avoid these time-consuming mistakes.

**GATHER** the items you will need, then follow the instructions by line as they match the line numbers of the attached application for WATERCRAFT CERTIFICATE OF TITLE AND CERTIFICATE OF NUMBER (Registration). Information about these important documents is provided below:

**Title.** If you are buying a used boat that has a current registration in Virginia, the boat has a title. Virginia titles are either yellow or green. If you purchased a boat that was previously registered in another state, and that state titled the boat, you must submit that title. Make sure all the owners on the title have signed it in the "assignment of title" portion as the sellers. Also have the previous owner complete the "purchaser" portion, listing the names of the purchasers exactly the way you want the boat registered and titled. The names of the purchasers on the title from the previous owner and the names on the application for the new registration and title must agree.

If the Virginia title is green, you already have an application for the new registration and title on the back of the green title. You may choose to just complete the back of the green title and submit it as your application. You may still use this application and include the green title if you choose. If the title from the previous owner is yellow, you must submit this completed application and the yellow title from the previous owner.

The original title must be submitted. Copies and titles that are altered with erasures or whiteout will not be accepted.

If the boat is registered in Virginia, and the previous owner does not have or can not find the title to the boat, call the Department at 804-367-6135. The Department can give you specific instructions or mail you an "affidavit" or a "Statement of Missing Title" that can serve in lieu of the title from the previous owner. If it was registered or titled in another state, call that state and ask what you should do.

**Manufacturer's Statement of Origin.** New boats do not have a title. All new boats have a Manufacturer's Statement of Origin. If this statement has an area, usually on the back, for assignment to the new owner, make sure it is assigned exactly the way you want the boat registered and titled. The names must agree on the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin and the application. Original Manufacturer's Statement of Origin must be submitted. Copies and statements altered with erasures or whiteout will not be accepted.

**Bill of Sale.** If you are buying a new boat, submit a copy of the bill of sale or sales invoice showing the gross purchase prices of the boat and motor separate from the trailer, and any sales tax paid. If you are buying a used boat that has not been issued a title, either by Virginia or by another state, a copy of the bill of sale signed by the previously registered owners can be used to support transfers of boat ownership.

**Out of State Registration.** If the boat was previously registered in another state, you will need to submit the registration card of the previous owner when you register and title in Virginia. If the boat was previously titled in another state, you will need to submit the original title.

**Line by Line Instructions for Completing the Application Form. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

**Line**

1. Check the type of transaction you are trying to accomplish by submitting this form. Most people will use this form to title and register a new or used watercraft. It can be used to renew the registration. If you are not going to operate the boat and simply wish to title it, check "Title Only."
2. If the boat was ever registered in Virginia or another state, it should have a registration number on the boat. Enter this number whether it is out of state or from Virginia. The first two letters designate the state. Include these letters as well. Examples: VA 1234 CC for a Virginia boat, or NC 1234 CC for a North Carolina boat.
- 3a. Please enter your social security number (or federal identification number if you are a company), your name, address and phone numbers. You may enter your Virginia driver's license "customer number" if you prefer (this is the "T" number used instead of the social security number).
- 3b. Check whether you are or are not active military. This information is needed by the county Commissioners of Revenue for personal property tax purposes.

4. If there is more than one owner of the boat, please circle either the "AND" or the "OR" to define the type of ownership. If neither is circled, an assumption is made that "AND" is correct. "AND" means everyone listed as an owner must sign the application, and the title if the boat is ever sold. "OR" means that all owners must sign the application, but only one owner is required to sign the title when the boat is sold.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The names on the application must agree with the names on the title, the manufacturer's statement of origin or the bill of sale. If the title from the previous owner, the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin form, or the bill of sale shows the boat was sold to two or more people, all of the people listed must also be on the application as owners or co-owners. Likewise, if these documents show the boat is sold to one person, but you want more than one person on the new registration or title, include a separate dated note, signed by the person whose name is on the title, Manufacturer's Statement of Origin, or the bill of sale as the purchaser, stating that he or she wants to add a name(s) to the registration or title. This note must be signed and dated.

5. Enter the second owner information, and if there are more than two owners, check the box and attach a sheet with the information on the additional owners.
6. All boats built after November 1, 1972 should have a 12-digit hull identification number. The hull identification number is like the serial number for the boat. It should be on the back right side of the boat. The number can also be found on the title from the previous owner and on the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin form. If you have any doubts about the number, include a pencil tracing of the number by holding a piece of paper over the number then sliding a pencil back and forth across the number to make an image of the number.
7. The make of the boat can be found on the title from the previous owner, on the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin, and usually, on the boat.
8. The model year can be found on the title from the previous owner or on the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin. If the boat was constructed after November 1, 1972 the last two digits of the hull identification number also designate the model year.
9. The length of the boat can be found on the title from the previous owner or on the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin. If you need to measure the boat, measure along the centerline of the boat from the front tip (bow) to the outside of the back (transom) of the boat. Do not include any steps or other projections beyond the transom of the boat.
10. Check the model of boat. Pontoon boats are "other" boats. Cuddy cabin boats, jonboats, canoes, skiffs, and jet boats are all "open" boats. Personal watercraft are those jet-powered boats, less than 14 feet long, that you ride "on" instead of "in."
11. The hull material can be found on the title from the previous owner or on the Manufacturer's Statement of Origin. The hull is the outside of the boat. Most are fiberglass, metal, or wood. Aluminum is considered "metal."
12. Check how you will be using the boat most of the time.
13. Check how your boat is powered. "Outboard" motors fix onto the boat on the outside. "Inboard/outboard" motors have the engine inside, but there is a steerable lower unit outside that has the prop on it. "Inboard" motors have the engine inside and a shaft that connects to a fixed prop that is not steerable. Boats with "inboard" motors usually have a rudder for steering. "Manual" usually means you paddle or oar the boat to make it move.
14. Check the type of fuel that supplies your main engine. Check only one. If you have a gasoline motor to power the boat and an electric trolling motor for fishing etc., check "gasoline."
15. Enter the information only if your motor(s) is over 25 horsepower. If the motor has not changed, the motor information can usually be found on the title from the previous owner. If you are registering and titling a new personal watercraft (ex. Jet Ski) or a new boat with an inboard/outboard motor, the motor information can usually be found on the Manufacture's Statement of Origin. Your motor will be listed as "Unknown" if the make you list is not one of the known motor manufacturers.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The answer to the first question in line 16 determines where your boat will be taxed for personal property purposes. If the locality assesses personal property tax, it will be assessed in the county or city where the boat is normally garaged, docked or parked. If the city or county where the boat is principally used (used most) is in another state, you must register your boat in that state even if the boat is garaged, docked or parked in Virginia. **If the locality you select is a "city" or "county" that has another city or county with the same name, write "City" or "County" after the name** (example: "Fairfax City" or "Fairfax County" "Richmond City" or "Richmond County"). Otherwise, you may be taxed in the wrong locality.

16. a and b. Enter the name of a **county or city** in Virginia in each line. Do not list the name of the water where the boat will be used. Do not list the name of the town you live in. If you keep the boat in a town, enter the county where the town is located.
17. Enter the name and address of the person or business (dealer) you purchased the boat from.
18. Check "yes" or "no" to the question regarding whether or not there is a lien on the boat. If you check "yes," enter the date of the lien then complete the name and address of the lienholder.

- 19a. Enter the date (month, day, and year) you purchased the boat.
- 19b. Enter the gross purchase price of the boat and motor only. Do not include the purchase price of the boat trailer. If the boat and/or motor was transferred without cost, enter zero in the cost line and a word or two on why the cost was zero (i.e. \$0 - gift, \$0 - divorce decree, \$0 - owner deceased, \$0 - estate settlement, etc.)
- 19c. The registration period for a boat registered in Virginia is 3 years. The registration fee for the 3 years is based on the length of the boat. Enter on just one of the lines in 19c the amount for your boat:

less than 16 feet long, the fee is \$27.00  
 16 feet long to less than 20 feet long, the fee is \$31.00  
 20 feet long to less than 40 feet long, the fee is \$37.00  
 40 feet long and longer, the fee is \$45.00

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The fee for a boat listed as 16 feet long is \$31.00, the fee for a boat 20 feet long is \$37.00, the fee for a boat 40 feet long is \$45.00.

**Livery boats** are those that are rented to others. If you do not rent boats to others, skip this line. If you operate a business that rents boats to others, the registration fees may be reduced. The registration fees are \$27.00 for the first ten boats, and \$21.00 for those boats after the first ten, regardless of length. Enter the amount on the appropriate length line, even if it is \$21.00.

- 19d. All boats that are registered must also be titled. Enter on line 21 titling fee of \$7.00. The titling fee is a one-time fee.
- 19e. You owe watercraft sales tax unless:

You already own the boat and you are using the form to make a change,  
 You constructed the boat yourself, or  
 You received the boat without cost (gift, divorce decree, deceased owner, etc.)

Unless one of these situations applies to you, you owe the 2% Watercraft sales tax. To calculate the amount of tax:

Enter the purchase price of the boat and motor      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 From line 19b  
 Multiply by 0.02 (2% = 0.02)                                                           x 0.02  
 Watercraft Sales Tax (enter on line 22)                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (maximum is \$2000)

Example: The watercraft sales tax on a boats and motors that costs \$12,345 and \$8,213.24 would be:

\$12,345	\$8,213.24
<u>x .02</u>	<u>x 0.02</u>
\$246.90	\$164.2648 rounded to \$164.26

20. Total the amount you entered on lines 19 a-e and enter the amount.
21. Sign and date the application. Everyone listed in sections 3a and 5a must sign the application.

**PLEASE**, review the application to make sure it is readable and completely filled out. Make sure you include with the application your fee, a properly assigned title from the previous owner if there is a title, a signed bill of sale if required, and a properly assigned Manufacturer's Statement of Origin if you are registering and titling a new boat.

**REMOVE** these instructions. Refer to them as you complete the application, then either keep or discard them. The only parts of this application package that need to be mailed in is the original, signed application.

**QUESTIONS?** If you have questions, you can visit the Department's web site at [www.dgif.state.va.us](http://www.dgif.state.va.us), call toll free to 877-898-2628 for answers to the most commonly asked questions, or call 804-367-6135 to talk with a Boating Services Technician. If you call to talk with a Boating Services Technician, remember the busiest months are April through July, the busiest day of the week is Monday, and the busiest times each day are mid-morning through mid-afternoon. Calls are accepted workdays, 8:15 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Your likelihood of reaching a Boating Services Technician on your first attempt is better if you call outside the busiest times.

**Please detach these instructions and refer to them as you complete the following application, then keep or discard.**

